LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 809
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

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What the Editor's Wife Is Thinking About

By Marcet Haldeman-Julius

Most readers of the July 12 Haldeman-Julius Weekly must have smiled with real amusement and a good deal of understanding over Jean Dean's rather naive but straight from the shoulder I--want-to-know letter to Mr. Haldeman-Julius. No shilly-shallying or equivocations for her. And, be she audacious little flapper, capable business-woman, staid (but restless) mother of a large family, or wise, new-fashioned grandmother with golden, bobbed hair, she—with all of those for whom she speaks—shall have answers as straight to the point and as frank as her questions.

Wrote Jean Dean to the editor: "The stuff about you is not very

interesting because we can get your literary angle by reading you. They say too much about what you write and read and not enough about whom you love and hate, what you eat and smoke and drink. How human are you? Are you a little devil among the girls or a sissy? What were you and are you down deep? Here is the kind of dope a woman wants to know."

She is correct. Of hundreds of letters that have come pouring in, only three of those from women have advised against a complete self-revelation.

"Ignore the silly letter," writes Sara E. Fiske, 244 Belmont Ave., Los Angeles. "John W. Gunn, Finger and others have given us enough. Our editor himself will give us all we require of himself. Let the editor alone. We want him unfettered."

And Dr. Ellen N. Iverson, evidently from the context of her

whole letter a thoughtful and cultivated woman, wisely warns: "Should you acquiesce and reveal the little personal properties as requested by Jean Dean the piquantness of our Editor would certainly be lost. You keep us guessing just sufficiently to make things interesting; and yet who can miss the quality of character that permeates the discussion spread out over the Editor's page? The real E. H.-J. is to be found in his editorials, and an autobiography would be a mere mask." (Wise and discerning lady! It is and it would.)

The third letter, oddly enough, is from a woman by almost the same name—Jeanne Deane—as the one who stirred the broth, so to speak. From 779 E. 52nd Place, Los Angeles, Calif., she writes: "I have just read Miss Jean Dean's letter to you and am going to advise you to remind her that curiosity once killed a cat. Go on writing about your work and let

your friends sing your praises."

On the other hand as against these three women, dozens of men have strongly advised against answering this questionaire—though several dozen more have written enthusiastically urging it. But how the letters have come flowing, catapulting, avalanching in from the ladies! And, with the notable exception of the three quoted, each and all confess—in every variety of tone and phrase—a frank and long standing curiosity. Fortunately—providentially, I should say!—E. H.-J. has a delightful and never failing sense of humor. He certainly needs it. If only you could see the letters—and poems—which he receives week in and week out from the fair sex! Every kind imaginable, from readable, well-written—extraordinarily well-written ones—motivated by feelings of authentic mental or spiritual kinship to just as many mash notes that often include offers of

marriage. I am sure Mrs. Rudolph Valentino, Mrs. Ben Hecht and myself—not to mention numerous others—could have quaint sport, should chance throw us together, comparing notes on the eternal feminine as it is portrayed before us in letters to our husbands. Yet, on the whole, in the case of E. H.-J. it is all rather forgivable for so much of his bubbling, alert and courageous self does get into his editorials that most of those who meet him there are drawn to him as irresistibly as those who meet him in the flesh. Yet he is far too kaleidoscopic and illusive to be more than very partially compressed into columns. And women, intuitively feeling this, are intrigued. Rightly enough. For, I ask you, whenever was it in feminine nature to put ideas before individuals? Not in mine, I willingly admit. First, last and always man will be interested in thoughts; woman, as all this

veritable flood of letters helps to indicate, in the personality behind them—which, of course, is just another way of saying that while man is concerned with the abstract, woman's concern is, as nature so wisely intended it to be, with the concrete.

First, before we take up all your questions, I must tell you that—thank heaven—neither the picture of the dapper, good-looking, regulation Hart, Schaffner and Marx salesman who adorns occasional issues of the Weekly nor yet the calculating, hard-eyed individual of the larger photographs which E. H.-J. releases for the Little Blue Book Stores, looks really like him. When it comes to his pictures he is amazingly indifferent and lacking in vanity. "Any old thing will do," seems to be his thought, though, between you and me, I believe he is rather under the impression that his latest photographs present him in the

aspect in which, at the moment, he most fancies himself—that of astute executive. To be sure, there is that side to his nature. He has, undeniably, a great talent for business. Moreover it is the acquired side and who does not treasure, far above natural gifts, the talents which one has struggled to develop? E. H.-J. is no exception. In point of fact—as you probably have deduced from your own contact with him—he is a very curious, and at times, baffling bundle of contradictions; an exceptional mixture of inspired idealism and practical commercialism. That combination is, to my prejudiced mind, what makes him unique. Almost, but not quite, his is a split personality. In this lies the secret of his success. The man of action has been able to put over with coolness and daring the ephemeral and elusive dreams of the idealist.

Whenever I think of E. H.-J. in detached, dissecting fashion I am

struck by the accuracy with which certain of Georg Brandes' paragraphs on Voltaire fit and describe him. For Emanuel, too, is "a bundle of nerves, surcharged with electric energy"; in a congenial atmosphere "the personification of wit"; his intellect, "with all its luminosity, is without heat." "A man," writes Brandes of Voltaire, "whose very being was will power, whose ambition was action, who longed after honor, who was charm personified, whose praise a distinction sought—whose scorn left marks like brands of iron." Those of you who read E. H.-J.'s columns most steadily, and therefore know him fairly well, will be the first to see the justice of the comparison. Certainly Voltaire is the one man to whom he can best be likened—in his influence for wide tolerance, in his hatred of injustice and bigotry, and in his love of truth.

But meeting Manuel (as he is known to all his intimates) you

will quite forget to analyze; instead you will capitulate at once to his engaging cordiality—that is, of course, providing he is in the mood to pay any attention at all to you. Courteous he will be always, but it is quite likely that, after politely but very absent-mindedly turning you over to Mr. Pete Kelly—his versatile secretary—or to me, he will completely disappear. Yet somehow you will be left with the impression that you have been treated royally.

At this time of year especially, he is particularly winning, for as soon as the season permits, he dons white and, shirt open at the throat, sleeves rolled up to the elbow, his usually clear olive skin a rich tan, thick, almost black, hair slightly blown, he presents to the world for the next three or four months an amazingly buoyant and youthful appearance. Every time I see him coming with his free easy stride, I feel a little tingle of pleasure

all along my nerves—and so, I am positive, would you.

He has the physique of the old Greek runners—slender, but not thin; well knit; one of those people whom one simply cannot imagine becoming stout—and who never do. Don't be misled by his picture in the saddle—that was taken in early spring and is a matter of sweaters. Perhaps it is because being only five feet one myself I must perforce always look up to his five feet six and a half, but to me he seems to have the odd trick of appearing, because of perfect proportions, taller than is actually the fact. I have told you that his hair is almost black; and fine. Some day, I hope, he will decide how he wants to wear it. Now, one week it is parted on the side and the next it is brushed straight back in a slick pompadour. The result is as you may imagine. If I were a fussy, fidgety wife instead of the tranquil, not to say philosophical

being into whom marriage with as volatile a being as Manuel has disciplined me, this vacillation in so vital a matter would drive me to distraction. His eyes are a clear, fine grey—like deep pools flecked with autumn leaves (pardon a wife's rhapsody, but fact compels it). Their most frequent expression is of dreaming whimsicality. And—state secret, for he is rather boyishly embarrassed by it—he has very long, very thick dark eye-lashes. In his eyes one reads all that is most delightful in Manuel; in his high broad forehead all that is finest; in his well-shaped generous mouth all that is most sensitive; in his square firm chin all that is aggressive. While his face as a whole is certainly pleasing—even beautiful at moments, it is also to a prejudiced eye quite homely—for the one reason that a nose misshapen in childhood, occupies too much space. But interesting looking and at-

tractive he undeniably is—with an air of subtle distinction.

Women, Jean Dean (since you ask), are invariably drawn to him and their interest—at first at least—is as invariably reciprocated. That is, if they are pretty or charming. Being very sure of himself and of my complete understanding, he allows himself a good deal more liberty than does perhaps the average husband. He has, let me warn you, a very disarming but very sophisticated technique. (There is precious little about the psychology of women that E. H.-J. does not know!) But his interest, though it may be—and often is—for the moment genuine, is fleeting. His attention is never held long by any one person. Temperamentally he is in striking contrast to Frank Harris. They stand, indeed, at the antipodes. For Emanuel is interested primarily not in people (either individually or collectively) but in

ideas for their own sake. Ideas (and his absorption in them) not emotions, direct his actions, shape his life. Any of the men who know him well will bear me out in this judgment. While warmly affectionate and quietly loyal to the very few people whom he really loves, he is undeniably mental in his interests and reactions. Altogether I find him one of the most thoughtless, but most consolingly lovable, most exasperatingly egocentric, but most pride-stirringly efficient of men. And now without further "chitter-chatter" let us on to your questions—though I do believe we should have better results if I tossed them aside and went on gossipping in my own fashion. However we will take it for granted that you know better than I the points you want covered.

Just why am I answering them instead of Emanuel? Well, for several reasons. But chiefly be-

cause I can say gracefully and truthfully about him many things which in all good taste he scarcely can say—or wish to say—about himself. Well, then:

1

Q.: When and where were you born?

A.: In Philadelphia, July 30, 1888. But he tells everyone he is thirty-two. (In his late twenties he invariably stated that he was in his forties.) Under severe pressure he can be brought to admit to 1889. I find it very human and amusing in him, though a trifle embarrassing. What woman likes to be thought three or four years older than her husband? I ask you. (Everyone hereabouts knows exactly when I was born—to the very hour. I am so many weeks older than so-and-so or so many months younger. You know how such items are stored away in the rag-bags of memory.) But the plain truth is

that a few weeks ago Emanuel became thirty-six. He used to be very proud when people thought him older than his age and now he is as delighted as a boy when they think him ten years younger —which he often looks. But, usually, he appears to an experienced eye to be just what he is—in the full glory of a healthy, vigorous maturity. Responsibility has added dignity to his carriage; the glowing consciousness of achievement sureness to his whole manner. He radiates power and happiness. One feels that he is dynamic.

2

Q.: Write 200 words about your parents.

A.: I have met Emanuel's parents only once—and then after Emanuel and I had been married four years and had two children. If you are curious, perhaps you think I wasn't! Of course, there had been a dutiful exchange of letters, but Emanuel's older sister

wrote always for her father and mother and her letters quite naturally did not express them, but herself.

To understand Emanuel's particular slant toward his parents you must realize that he left home to earn his own living when he was fifteen. And from that time on his visits were so infrequent as to be negligible—but even so his, to say the least, casual attitude toward his family is to me almost incredible. Can you imagine it—he had completely forgotten the married name of one of his sisters, and it took the utmost diplomacy on my part to discover it. This sister, by the way, is a delightful woman with whom I am sure, if I saw her oftener, I should have a genuine friendship.

Never shall I forget my feelings as just four years ago, the taxi wound in and out among the streets of Philadelphia to 2600 Montgomery Avenue which, as everyone who is

familiar with the City of Brotherly Love will recall, is in a modest but self-respecting section. I knew, of course, that Mr. and Mrs. Julius were simple-hearted, courageous folk who, coming from Russia to this country several years before Emanuel was born, had fought their way through sharp poverty to a comfortable competence so that in these later years they find themselves completely independent of any of their six living children. Usually in people who have dared to migrate to new lands one may be reasonably certain of finding imagination, stamina, and a mellow ripeness that comes from deep experience. I was pleasantly conscious of all these qualities in the father and mother of Emanuel.

They embraced both their little grand-daughter and myself warmly, with tears of such frank and honest emotion that my own eyes grew wet. With what exquisite

tenderness they caressed her! With such love that each touch seemed a blessing. In the profound realization that in our Alice their blood mingled with that of my own family I was conscious of a sudden, overwhelming sense of kinship so that my sojourn in their thoroughly comfortable home was to us all unalloyed pleasure. Yet it was inevitable that I should analyze them. In Mr. Julius (who after several abortive attempts in small shop-keeping settled down for years to his true metier—binding books by hand) I could see many traits that, in varied forms, he had passed on to Emanuel. I am quite positive that it is from his father Emanuel gets his love of beautiful formats and his ability to push aside obstacles, to believe in himself, to accept his own, instead of other's, estimates of his achievements. His mother is all brooding warmth, full of endearing qualities. And—strictly between

ourselves—Emanuel, at his best, is very like her. In a word the Juliuses are people of great feeling and simplicity, too conscious of their own intrinsic worth to make the slightest pretentions.

3

Q.: Where, how and when were you educated?

A.: Emanuel until his thirteenth year went to public school in Philadelphia, finishing the eighth grade. After that—until he was fifteen—he went, rather fitfully, to night school. After he was fifteen his only school was the one which he is trying to make more available to all—the great University in Print. For a time he was bell-boy at the Castle school for girls and during the long hours of his waiting he read and read, learning far more, because of his great eagerness, I have no doubt, than the students in their organized courses of study. Always within him was developing a more

and more appreciative taste for good literature. Naturally enough, under the circumstances—always seeing life as he did from one angle—he became interested in Socialism. He began to indulge in public speaking. His reading, therefore, took a more professional turn. Before long the urge for self-expression drove him into writing. In a little while he was on the New York Call. Public School gave him the rudiments. But it was his own earnest desire and contact with the great minds of the world that gave him his education.

4

Q.: Will you tell us your boyhood and early duties?

A.: Emanuel's duties seem to have consisted of everything from carrying coal to wiping dishes. Yet I will confide something. About his boyhood he is—to the world at large—consistently and intentionally evasive. The reason

is not far to seek. His father and mother, fine and sensitive for all their inhibitions (doubly so, indeed, because of them) still are living. To describe fully his early environment and more particularly his reactions to it, is to hurt them. He never says this but I well know that it is what he feels. But this much I think I may tell you—if you have read Emanuel's Color of Life you already realize it—as a boy he was ill-at-ease in his home; out of tone with his surroundings —surroundings which breathed an essentially old world atmosphere while he was all palpitating impatience for new visions. His boyhood was full of mental and spiritual conflicts. The proof that his home was not congenial—at fifteen he left it.

5

Q.: Did you flirt with women when younger? Love affairs?

A.: Of course. And again, of course.

6

Q.: Where have you lived mostly and did you run the old Appeal to Reason?

A.: Raised in Philadelphia, Emanuel spent the next years of his life in and about New York City. From there he went to Milwaukee where he had many exciting adventures on the Milwaukee Leader. From Milwaukee, after a period in Chicago on the now defunct "World," he journeyed to the Pacific Coast where he created, edited and finally sold, at a good figure—trust Emanuel for that!—the Western Comrade. From the coast he returned to New York where he became Sunday editor of The New York Call—the paper which had accepted his first little squib. From New York he came (dreaming his dreams of eventually becoming a writer of distinction) to Girard, Kans., to be on the editorial staff of the old Appeal to Reason. Later, with Mr. Louis

Kopelin, he became one of its joint editors. Still later he bought out the Wayland interest and became its owner. As his point of view and convictions changed, it was inevitable since, in spite of his swashbuckling and Barnum-like moments, E. H.-J. is fundamentally honest—it was inevitable that with the change of his ideas eventually the policy, and at last even the name, of the paper should change. For as I have said before, Emanuel is essentially interested not in people nor issues that concern them but in ideas for their own sake. To make these available—the great thoughts of the past and present, the great thoughts of the future—is the true purpose of the Haldeman-Julius Weekly as well as of The Little Blue Books.

7

Q.: Was your money inherited? If not, how did you get it?

A.: No, Emanuel is quite frankly a self-made man. At the time

of the old, and then steadily declining, Appeal to Reason, and later, when circumstances presented the entire institution, I was able to put thirty-five thousand dollars into the paper. For all the balance of the purchase price of seventy-five thousand dollars Emanuel gave notes—every one of which he paid. As he has expanded and developed his plant, it often has become necessary for him to borrow heavily and I have been glad to be able to put at his disposal various securities for use as collateral. The strain, at times, for both of us, has been severe. But make no mistake about it—without this assistance Emanuel's progress undoubtedly would have been much slower, but just as sure. With only that comparatively small initial outlay on my part, he has built up single-handed, by sheer brain and will power—by sheer genius, one is tempted to say—a tremendous, almost 100 per cent

automatic plant—and one which now, incredible as it may seem, stands entirely free from debt. Aside from any other than a financial viewpoint, Emanuel's has been a most amazing and brilliant achievement.

8

Q.: Why the odd name? Does it show a mental twist or some sort of a crank notion?

A.: On Emanuel's part the addition of my name to his own was purely a response to an earnest wish of mine; a generous gesture acknowledging our full partnership.

9

Q.: Are you egotistical and have you a cocky strut?

A.: When E. H.-J. walks he usually is bound for a very definite destination and has some equally definite thought in mind. He never, even on the lawn in the evening, strolls, but walks, as he does everything else, rapidly and easily.

Henry and Alice have to trot briskly to keep up with him and never, by any chance, would it occur to Emanuel to slow his pace to suit them. Children and adults alike must keep up with him—or be left behind. This is quite as true of him mentally. He never talks "down" to anyone—nor long —let me warn you!—to those who cannot match wits with his own.

The other part of this question brings to my mind a sensible letter—and an interesting one—from Irene K. Drown, 314 W. 1st Street, Sioux City, Iowa. Interesting, because without having seen Emanuel she answers with remarkable perceptiveness much of the July 12 questionaire. After pointing out that as "she and the majority of those who enjoy his writings never can hope to meet and know him personally" she goes on to urge that they should therefore be permitted to meet him just as

"personally as possible through his paper."

"I believe," she writes, "you are a jolly good fellow among your friends." Yes—when he is inclined to be jolly at all, he is very jolly, the very best of good fellows. And in this mood men and women alike find him quite irresistible. But it is rare. Much more often he is withdrawn, impersonal, aloof.

"You are not," she continues, "egotistical." True. Though he is ego-centric, he is not egotistical. Endlessly and intensely interested in himself, he is nevertheless equally above self-importance, a pontifical manner and false modesty. And if he is sure of himself in more ways than I can enumerate at this writing, I am bound to say events invariably bear him out. He knows what he can do and he certainly does not hesitate to say so. On the other hand he says it so reasonably and with

such detachment and objectivity of manner that it is impossible—as well as unfair—to consider this egotism. He would speak in exactly the same way of someone else—under the same circumstances. And although he has supreme confidence in his own powers, he is not opinioated. On the contrary, he is infinitely tolerant toward others. He does not expect people to agree with him—in fact, he honestly does not care whether or not they do. He likes praise, of course, but only when it comes from discriminating people. Empty puffs anger him. He has a spontaneous and thorough contempt for polite compliments, bears no grudge against his most severe critics, and values the opinions of a fair antagonist. He does not "blow" nor boast. But he never suppresses, or for a moment considers suppressing, his own capabilities, his own viewpoint, his own individuality. He has implicit faith in them and is

quite frankly determined that the whole world also shall know them.

10

Q.: How tall are you and how heavy?

A.: "You are inclined to stoutness," says Miss Drown. No, there she is wrong, and so I imagine are many of you. He is five feet six and a half inches tall—as I think I mentioned before—and weighs 140 very well distributed pounds. Once—in the dark ages—tell it not!—he did actually weigh 150 pounds. But this was for a very short period indeed—though ever since then he daily consults the children's bathroom scales. They steadily register a very unimpeachable weight for his height.

11

Q.: What kind of voice have you? High or low?

A.: "You have a pleasing voice," answers Miss Drown. And this time she is right. For Eman-

uel's voice is one of the most charming things about him. It is a baritone, mellow and thoroughly cultivated both in tone and in quality. His speech is literary without artificiality—correct, without pretense or show-off.

12

Q.: Do you sing?

A.: E. H.-J. has an excellent knowledge of music and a splendid voice—but he does not sing in the formal sense of the word. In the office and at home he neither hums, whistles, nor sings. He is a very quiet, almost silent, man, going about much of the time in a state of what John W. Gunn has aptly called "opaque thoughtfulness." A thoughtfulness broken, however, at moments, by sudden sun-bursts of witty chat—which often end for both of us in delightful hearty laughter.

13

Q.: Did you ever drink and do

you like a wine dinner? In the old days?

A.: Why the past tense? He does—as Miss Drown again correctly surmises—but he likes the spirit of alcohol rather than the physical act of drinking. In all the years of our marriage I never have seen him drunk. But he is by no means a prohibitionist. Among the more sophisticated liquors, as among the more sophisticated foods, Manuel is a connoiseur. But I doubt if he drinks, on an average, more than once a month—if that often.

14

Q.: What is your politics?

A.: This is what Miss Drown herself asks. (And several others with her.) Well, it is a difficult question and it is no wonder Emanuel's readers cannot answer it "to their own satisfaction."

Really, he believes in no political party, nor does he have any

faith in any particular political leader. He is suspicious of all politicians. Fundamentally he is unfriendly to all ideas of government. He grants that governments are needed to maintain order, but he holds that governments really create more disorder themselves than the disorders they stop. He agrees with Spencer and Thoreau and others that the best condition is a state of no government, but he is practical enough to realize that we are not ready for such a condition. Nevertheless he prefers to have as little as possible to do with governmentalists. He has an inborn—really a very amusing—dislike for government officials, lawyers, law-makers, judges, tax collectors—all, he claims, are nuisances which must be tolerated, but which would be ultimately dispensable once the standards of intelligence were to become sufficiently high. The individual, he claims, should not be dependent on

governments, nor should the government be permitted to harass the liberties of individuals as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others. He agrees with Thomas Jefferson that that government is best which governs least. He has small patience with classes that look to their government for help. He insists that the middle western farmers, in particular, disgust him. They are, he points out, everlastingly trying to get something out of the government, little knowing that that is utterly impossible, that governments are intended to give nothing to any particular class and to take from all classes. He has nothing but contempt for the vote-getters who make sweeping promises to the farmers in this section, the workers in another section, and the business men in still another section. They are fakers, offering classes bribes, in order to win support, from treasuries not be-

longing to them. He considers the vote a pretty little toy for children and women and men to play with. He often says, with fine irony in his voice, that he sees no reason why children over six years of age should not be permitted to vote. It wouldn't make any difference in the end. I wish you could hear him when he is really "wound up." "Put your faith," he will urge quietly, "not in the ballot but in your own character and energy and will. You vote only once in a year or two years, but you live every day. Live so that you won't have to use a vote to line your pocket with some sort of an advantage which will never really come to you. The remedy for each individual to seek is one of self-education and improvement through daily effort in life, in business, in work. Do not seek for help outside yourself. Do not look to a government for help—that is for paupers, not men.

Let the government exploit you, as long as it can, but don't delude yourself into the state of mind of thinking you can exploit the government. If you exploit your vote you really exploit your own character. Vote, if it makes you happy and adds to your self-importance, but don't take it too seriously. It will never bring you anything of lasting value."

15

Q.: Do you run a flivver or what? Were you ever up in a plane? Why not?

A.: No, E. H.-J. has not been in a plane. For the simple reason that the occasion for it never has presented itself. And I can no more imagine Emanuel going out of his way to ride in one simply for the sensation, than I can imagine him solemnly electing to "bump the bumps," ride on a merry-go-round or "loop the loop" at a street fair. Emanuel's first trip in a plane, you may be sure,

will occur only when there is a definite and excellent reason for it.

He is neither adventurous nor timid—taking all physical hazards very much as they come—quite as carelessly and philosophically as he takes their unfortunate results. Well acquainted as our household is with his physical grit we all were stirred by the nonchalance with which, when his horse fell with him (and on him) last summer, he managed to get up again and limp into the house. He had only my help and made so little fuss that we did not even imagine —until the doctor came—that his leg was broken. We were still more impressed with the patience and pluck with which—his leg in a cast—he went daily to his work, even contriving, after the first week, to drive his car, himself. I assure you I have seen more than one man no more disabled consider himself housebound and a candidate for all his friends' just

solicitude. But for Emanuel the whole episode was merely cause for light and playful humor. No one but his very enduring self was in the least inconvenienced.

As to what make of car he drives—it is not and never has been in all his history—a flivver. He began with a little Buick roadster which was traded in—as our family increased—for a five-passenger one and this in turn for a Studebaker. The Studebaker gave way to a twelve cylinder Packard sedan. And last year Emanuel bought for himself in addition a beautiful Cadillac coupe which is the car he constantly uses. Like his library and his books, his little typewriter and pencil sharpener, his pen and his saddle-horse—it is his, strictly and exclusively. Never, under any circumstances, should I dream of using it—though often I am invited to ride with him, but I assure you always and only in the

capacity of honored guest. His love for it is like his feeling for his Benares edition of Sir Richard Burton's Arabian Nights, for his autographed copies of Hardy—for all beautiful formats. Its strong, stately lines thrill him and he drives—as you may perhaps have guessed—both skillfully and fast.

16

Q.: Do you belong to any luncheon clubs?

A.: None.

17

Q.: Did you ever belong to a lodge or church?

A.: Never. The idea of Emanuel in either is utterly incongruous.

18

Q.: Are you an agnostic?

A.: This question has been reiterated again and again by both men and women—among others by Reverend W. E. Kirby of Manchester, Calif. He writes that he heartily approves the idea of pre-

senting the real Haldeman-Julius and adds that having been a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church for eighteen years—since he was eighteen years of age—he is interested in Emanuel's views on religion. Already he has gleaned some ideas along this line from E. H.-J.'s articles. (Everyone who has read his columns in the Weekly certainly must realize that—when Emanuel thinks at all about religion—he has for the inadequacy of its stereotyped forms only a pitying tolerance; for their inefficiency—as he sees it—a vast incurious amazement.)

But Reverend Kirby does not ask for Emanuel's attitude toward creeds, so-called orthodoxy, and the like, but toward the existence of a God; the immortality of the soul; revelation; and the divinity of Christ.

"It is all such a matter of speculation," says Emanuel gently when, from time to time, he is

urged—much against his inclination—into discussion of these fundamentals. "Perhaps—who can tell—there may be some sort of a Will back of it all, but these people who think that they have it neatly worked out: 'Here it is down in a book,' who are so certain of themselves, so satisfied—I have no patience with them. We are all ignorant of the truth. How can anyone definitely affirm or definitely deny the existence of a God?" Meanwhile, sincere as he is in this statement, disbelief is in his heart. To him it is inconceivable that the universe should have had a beginning. To say that God created the world means nothing to Emanuel, for he follows with the question: "Who made God? Nothing cannot create something." Nor does he conceive of the universe as always having existence, for this, to him, seems equally impossible. He is frankly baffled by the infinite. Like Hux-

ley, he is convinced that Agnosticism is the only position an honest thinker can take. He cannot conjecture what can be the answer to the riddle of life and he smiles politely but incredulously over the arguments of those who are positive they *know*.

As for his opinions regarding the immortality of the soul, he first explains, with some forbearance, the finite mind cannot comprehend the infinite. He does not know whether or not man, or any other animal, has a soul, and it seems to him the last word in futility to guess. To be sure, he frequently uses the word soul, but only in a poetic sense. Not granting the existence of a soul, naturally he never speculates upon whether or not this which he does not recognize lives after death. The soul he places alongside the God-concept and leaves it there with a gracious bow. Revelation he dismisses with a wave. "Bosh," he

says and relights his pipe. But when one asks him about Jesus he grows interested. "I like Jesus," he asserts, unmistakable friendliness in his voice. "I respect him in many ways, but I think he has been grossly overestimated. He was a great man, but not the greatest. I, of course, believe not a jot about his having been other than a man. I consider Shakespeare much greater than Jesus. I believe that Voltaire too was greater. And yet, mark you, I admire Jesus. The tragedy of his life will always fascinate and move me. But let me be honest. I find more in men like Goethe, Schopenhauer, Socrates, Michael Angelo, Voltaire, Shakespeare and a number of other creative masters than I ever could get out of the life or the philosophy of Jesus. Jesus has meant little in my life, while Shakespeare and the other geniuses I admire have meant everything to me. If Jesus and

Shakespeare were alive today I should first seek out Shakespeare, and afterwards, and only afterwards, should I seek out Jesus." This is astonishing, I admit, but E. H.-J. says it in a low voice, between puffs, as though he were discussing the weather or asking whether his dinner is to be steak or goose.

To those who have achieved either faith or atheism after bitter opposition from outward and inward forces (how well I remember what a family uproar there was the first time I refused communion!) to those of you to whom your convictions, in either direction, represent courage and victory, it will seem simply inconceivable that a thinking, aware mind such as Emanuel can dismiss so lightly the whole profound subject. But the plain, unvarnished truth is that, as he himself says, he is "just not interested." He admits easily that his opinions along this

line are the result not of careful thought but of placid indifference.

This is quite natural for, extraordinary as it may seem, Emanuel never has come, in a personal way, face to face with these questions. Questions, I have no doubt, decided in the end by one's temperament rather than by logic, but, by most of us at least, faced and decided. It is almost unbelievable, but Emanuel never has passed through sorrow. Never has he lost—through death or disillusion—anyone inexpressibly dear to him. Never in all his life has he met with a devastating defeat. Hardships he has known—plenty of them—but not grief; struggle, but not failure. Never yet has he had to go down into the depths and innermost recesses of his own soul to search out in agony or humiliation its ultimate secrets. Life for Emanuel has been one long exhilarating conquering of obstacles;

one exciting, but steady advance, a solidly-built pyramid of success. Is it any wonder that he is gloriously free, superbly self-confident, daring almost to the point of recklessness, and implacably ruthless to those who attempt to thwart his purposes? Is it any wonder that to Emanuel, intensely preoccupied as he is with the stimulating present, and with all whom he loves close about him—is it any wonder that to him the question of a possible future is utterly remote and the existence or nonexistence of a God a problem too hypothetical to hold for him any real significance?

19

Q.: Do you "believe in," approve of, or practice what is commonly called Free Love? Kindly do not side-step, play upon words or otherwise evade a frank and unambiguous answer. (Thus writes William W. Murray, M. D., from 103 N. Broad Street, Suffolk, Va.)

A.: Emanuel's invariable answer to this frequent question is

that he does not. At the same time, when there is no intention of having children, E. H.-J. considers it really quite unimportant whether or not a man and woman go through the marriage ceremony. A great love justifies itself always and is far above and beyond all mere civic forms. Furthermore, he believes that a passing light-o'-love affair between mature and experienced people may, under certain circumstances, very well prove a valuable and sincere experience to both and yet not warrant for either a marriage with all its manifold obligations and the profound implications that go with the undertaking of a life-long partnership. Certainly as a young man — as most young men do, he approved and practiced (without any later regrets) complete freedom. No doubt, too, he will look on quite unperturbed if his son passes through this same phase. But not his daughter.

Though for the indiscretions and radical sex convictions of others he has the largest tolerance, I assure you he would consider me the most lamentable failure as a mother should even the shadow of such a problem ever arise in connection with Alice. And there, Dr. Murray, I think you have the true crux of the matter.

Always where children are involved Emanuel, himself a most devoted and tender father, takes a conservative attitude. Nothing he believes should be permitted to endanger their happiness and security. And any arrangement other than normal family life certainly does. In the mutual steadfastness and emotional integrity of its parents lies the child's sanctuary. He has very little patience with a father or mother who selfishly and without grave justification willfully disrupts a home.

At the same time he recognizes the infinite complexity of life;

man, a natural-born varietist, polygamous for hundreds of centuries, cannot, even if he wishes, become suddenly and absolutely monogamous. "We are tending in this direction, however," he will say thoughtfully, "undoubtedly the greatest health and happiness—and safety—for both men and women lies in monogamy. But," with a mischievous twinkle in his gray eyes, "it will be at least two or three million years before this is realized."

20

Q.: Are you charitable and how do you display it?

A.: Emanuel is constitutionally averse to people who are "broke." He will make almost unbelievable sacrifices for an idea in which he is interested, but he has the most appalling, total lack of imagination when it is a matter of a concrete individual in distress.

"What of it," he will say stubbornly, "I was broke more than

once. But I never let myself be an object of charity." Just as surely as Emanuel's heart warms to the working man and his problems, just as surely does it harden to the derelict, to the vagabond, to the man or woman with a long tale of woe. Robert Graham's reactions to "Annie" in our short story, "The Unworthy Coopers," is very typically Emanuel's. And often I find it as disconcerting as did Janet.

As for donations and subscriptions—he is hopeless. Both temperamentally and from conviction he is "agin" them. Churches and colleges he believes, and often asserts, should be as self-supporting as lodges and newspapers. When the sponsors of one of them must resort to begging, it is proof positive that it has no plausible reason for being.

Naturally, there will arise occasionally some case unusual or drastic enough to break down even

Manuel's scruples. And, invariably, he will go to the utmost pains to assist a talented writer—providing—and only providing—that he can do so with sufficient tact to make his assistance appear a convincing and reasonable remuneration; otherwise, no matter how much Emanuel may want to help, he will not do so. No human being ever hated, as does Emanuel Haldeman-Julius, to lend anything—from a fountain pen to money. He would rather give away—in the fashion I have just indicated—one hundred dollars than lend the selfsame man ten. When it comes to his dealings with authors of the Little Blue Books he is a veritable Robin Hood—dickering to the point of hard-fistedness with well-known writers and overpaying and allowing absurd amounts of expense money to ones he believes are brilliant. But toward charity as such there is, deep down in his heart, a fixed and strong resent-

ment. In all sincerity he feels that it is a crime, shameful alike to him who receives it and to him who gives it.

21

Q.: How many hours a day do you read? Slow or fast?

A.: How many hours a day, you must mean, does he *not* read. He begins reading at the breakfast table, pauses long enough to drive to the office, begins reading again, reads and dictates, reads and works, reads and writes, all during the morning; makes straight for his overstuffed couch at noon and reads steadily until lunch is announced; pauses long enough (usually but not always) to share himself with his family —for luncheon is the children's meal, during which they are permitted to monopolize their father. During the afternoon—as in the morning — he tucks reading into every odd moment—pausing at five for his horseback ride. After his

shower, again he reads steadily until dinner. After dinner he carries his chair out on the lawn, and while the children, dogs and kittens frolic he reads steeped in the comfortable knowledge that we all love to have him in our midst —even if mentally far from us. As the light fails he puts aside his book and tells the children stories. Together we all go upstairs, the children to their bed-rooms, Emanuel to his beloved library where, after I have them asleep, I join him and, both settled comfortably, we read on until ten-thirty—or perhaps eleven or twelve. He does not, let me add, read in bed. From morning until night, not one available second is neglected, but once his light snaps off at the end of the day—books, magazines, newspapers—all are forgotten. He falls asleep as he does everything—swiftly and without effort.

22

Q.: How long do you sleep?

A.: That depends entirely, dear friends, upon where he is—and the day of the week. No Tom Sawyer ever enjoyed his Saturdays as does Emanuel his Sundays—and first and most precious privilege of the day is to be able to sleep just as long as he wants. Our household is organized around and about him, his wishes, and his comfort. And woe betide the children or any of their many little friends who disturb Daddy on the morning sacred to his slumbers.

But ordinarily he rises about half-past six. He and I breakfast at seven and seven-thirty sees him at the plant. So you can figure for yourself—from ten-thirty at night until six-thirty. Emanuel needs, in order to be at his very best, a full regular eight hours' sleep every night. He would enjoy nine and when on a vacation—and on Sundays—not infrequently luxuriates in ten. He is, fortunately for him, one of those people able

to take and be infinitely refreshed by a short twenty or thirty-minute nap. His brain drawn to a fine tension when he works, relaxes easily and completely. He does not sleep heavily, but he does sleep tranquilly and soundly.

23

Q.: Do you smoke?

A.: He does. Almost as steadily as he reads. In the car—a cigar; in the office, at home and in the saddle — the moment's favorite among his numerous pipes. Never, unless we are entertaining guests who happen to care for them, does he smoke cigarettes. When he does he seems to enjoy them in true dilettante, Greenwich Village fashion. For Emanuel, when he chooses, can loaf delightfully—quite as easily as he works.

24

Q.: What do you eat and how often?

A.: Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and when I am in dutiful wifely

mood—a very light lunch about ten o'clock in the evening.

Emanuel enjoys doubly whatever comes from our own farm and garden. We have simple, sensible fare calculated to build a husky little Alice and Henry as well as stoke up an energy-burning father. We raise our own ducks and geese —our own turkeys and guineas, much of our own pork and beef and mutton—and of course, our own chickens. For great occasions —our piece de resistance is roast pig served in true Charles Lamb fashion. Fine Jersey cows give us fresh unsalted butter, clotted cream, and cheeses of our own make. And from our garden come in due season the various vegetables from the first radishes to the welcome sweet corn. The simple salads with oil dressing, so important for health, appear regularly on our table both for lunch and dinner, but we have no fads nor isms. Our one object is to

have the food well balanced as to sugar, salts, starches, fats and proteins, etc. We have a constant and never-ending stream of guests and Emanuel is at his happiest when carving one of our own fowls or sugar-cured hams for a congenial tableful. He is a most cordial and compelling host and when we are alone never fails to be appreciative of a well-thought-out, well-cooked meal. He eats as he does everything else—moderately and with thorough enjoyment. Never but once in all our nine years of marriage has a doctor been called for E. Haldeman-Julius.

25

Q.: Do you ever swear?

A.: Very seldom. Strictly between ourselves, many people would prefer that he did—rather than listen to the cool, biting comments —not to say sardonic jeers with which E. H.-J. blasts those who annoy him. But when he does swear one realizes that after all

the few homely oaths that he hurls can be even more deadly. Like most quiet, self-absorbed people he is not easily angered—but when he is he finds it difficult to regain his inner poise.

26

Q.: Are you quick-tempered and do you "fly off" and put on airs?

A.: Put on airs? Quick-tempered? No. As I have just said, Emanuel is very slow to anger. But he is very easily irritated—by noises, by interruptions, by stupidity. He is impatient of anything and anybody who distracts him from what he is trying to do. A French window banging (oh, the Kansas winds!) will bring an outraged father and husband to his library door. But the moment the window is shut peace again floods the world. E. H.-J. is his usual serene self and, as far as he is concerned, the whole little incident has faded into oblivion.

27

Q.: How many hours daily are you at the executive grind?

A.: From 7:30 to 12:00, from 1:00 to 5:00, always. And often from 6:30 to 8 or 9 in the evenings. Sometimes, when the orders are especially pressing, even Sunday afternoons must be given over to the Little Blue Books. His reading in the evenings is almost invariably the reading of new manuscripts. When we ride in the car, or on horseback, Emanuel's talk and thoughts are constantly of the Little Blue Books. Literally from the time he first opens his eyes until he finally closes them he is at work; but in actual hours at the office I should say ten a day —month in and month out—to be a fair average.

28

Q.: What are your actual executive duties?

A.: It seems to me they consist of everything from planning

and suggesting new Little Blue Books, accepting and rejecting new manuscripts, and editing those on hand, to ordering coal. However he has a very able assistant in Mr. Louis Kopelin who is in charge of the mechanical plant and who takes many details in connection with it off Emanuel's shoulders. But Emanuel is the active editor of both the Haldeman-Julius Weekly and of Life and Letters as well as of all the Little Blue Books. The constant expansion of his plant brings to him daily new problems to solve; and most of his advertising he writes and places himself—a tremendous task. Literally he does the work of five men—and, still more remarkable, does it all easily as well as efficiently. I cannot impress upon you too fully what a capacity the man has for work. Nor how much he enjoys it.

29

Q.: Can you co-ordinate and leave things to others or do you

want to potter with everything and annoy your men?

A.: Emanuel who abhors puttering and and inefficiency employs only very capable subordinates. Each knows that he is expected to deliver results, that the pragmatic test only will be applied to his work. They know, too, that nothing—absolutely nothing—slips by Emanuel. Consequently his entire staff render him their best efforts. Either they fulfill their duties to his entire satisfaction or they are quickly and decisively dismissed. For Emanuel "potters" with nothing on God's green earth. Swift in decision, stern in his demands, but just—this is the way his men find him.

30

Q.: What is your idea of the best way to enjoy your old age, if you live to be 60 or 70 and are well preserved?

A.: Sixty or seventy, did you say? My word, are we getting

old or is the asker of this question merely very young? Why, child, at sixty or seventy Emanuel will be doing precisely what he is doing now—living intensely; working hard. Time brings many changes, of course, but his work, whatever it may be, will be connected you may be sure in some way with literature. I see no reason why, like Thomas Hardy, Georg Brandes, Browning, and others, Emanuel's powers should not ripen rather than diminish with the years. Temperate as he is in all his habits, a man of tranquil emotions, sound physically, with equable nerves, and living as he does in a well-ordered, sympathetic environment, it is absurd to think that he will want at any given time deliberately to lay aside his creative interests. He may, and undoubtedly will, need and take rest, but rest is all the more delicious when congenial work looms ahead. And to tell you the truth it is im-

possible for either Emanuel or myself to picture him—even at eighty—other than full of plans and visions—a potential and powerful figure in his chosen world of literature.